



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SOUTHERN AFRICA

IN FOCUS

2nd QUARTER

PROMOTING EQUITABLE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH IN A DEMOCRATIC SOUTHERN AFRICA

IN FOCUS

by Anthony Vodraska, Acting Regional Director



The past quarter has seen a number of major milestones for USAID/Southern Africa. The signing of a new Grant Agreement with SADC (see “On the

Move”) to improve shared river basin management signaled the U.S. Government’s strong support for SADC’s Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan. The final phase of USAID’s worldwide web-based core financial system called *Phoenix* (see “In the Spotlight”) occurred in Southern Africa, which was an important milestone in a multi-year project to improve the Agency’s financial management practices. The release of five educational films on trade-related issues by the USAID Trade Hub (see “USAID Trade Hub Happenings”) has generated enormous interest and discussion at regional and international events where they have been viewed already by over seven hundred public and private sector representatives. There are many more exciting achievements and developments detailed in this issue of *In Focus*.

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ON THE MOVE

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) and USAID have entered into a **Grant Agreement for Improved Management of Shared River Basins**. The agreement was signed on April 27 at the SADC Consultative Conference in Windhoek by Ambassador Katherine H. Canavan, the U.S. Secretary of State’s Special Representative to SADC; Lloyd A. Pierson, USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa; and Dr. Tomaz Augusto Salomao, SADC Executive Secretary. U.S. Ambassador to Namibia Joyce A. Barr was also present at the signing ceremony. The ceremony marked the achievement of a U.S. Government foreign policy objective to reengage with SADC after a three-year period in which no agreements were signed.



Ambassador Canavan, Ambassador Barr, Assistant Administrator Pierson, and Executive Secretary Salomao at the signing ceremony

The Agreement encompasses the ongoing USAID/Southern Africa program to improve the management of the Okavango River Basin and protect diversity. It also provides for new activities, to be jointly identified with SADC, that support implementation of the SADC Revised Protocol on Shared Watercourses. As noted by Mr. Pierson, "...the management of the Okavango River Basin and protection of the Okavango Delta are critical to ensure the future of one of the world's largest inland deltas."

Acquisition and Assistance personnel from ten USAID Missions participated in **Procurement Management Certification Program (PMCP) training** hosted by USAID/Southern Africa in June. PMCP is required of those employees in the procurement workforce who perform 50% or more of their assigned duties and responsibilities in the processing of procurement actions. Chuck Huskey, a trainer for the Northwestern Procurement Institute in Seattle, Washington, led participants through two courses: Contract Administration II and Advanced Simple Acquisition Procedures. Trainees came from USAID Missions in Botswana, Jordan, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Kudos to Cynthia Judge, who planted the seeds to bring the course to Gaborone, and to Waymon Carroll, Margaret Seja, Barry Collins, and Mirriam Sitambi for their planning and coordination efforts.



PMCP training participants

More than forty children gathered at USAID/Southern Africa on **Take Your Child to Work Day** on April 20. This was an opportunity for children of USAID employees to learn more about the important work of their

parents and to start thinking about what they want to do when they reach adulthood. During the morning, the children were welcomed by Anthony Vodraska, Acting USAID Regional Director, before heading to the U.S. Embassy for a short session with Ambassador Katherine Canavan. The children then toured USAID/Southern Africa with their parents. Many of the primary school children "assisted" their parents at work for the rest of the day, while secondary school students enjoyed briefings on financial management, human resources, procurement, and information technology.



Ambassador Canavan greets the children on Take Your Child to Work Day

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Phoenix "Go Live" Day

It was 8:45 on a cold morning on May 16. But inside the Regional Financial Management Office (RFMO) of USAID/Southern Africa, the excitement was creating more than enough heat. Suddenly a loud cheer erupted as Gofaone Sebonego successfully submitted the Mission's first invoice into USAID's new enterprise accounting system, Phoenix. Similar celebrations took place later in the day following the first voucher and accounting entries.

Phoenix "Go Live" Day was the culmination of a long and challenging team-oriented planning effort that began more than a year ago. As "Go Live" Day approached, RFMO embarked upon "The Forty Days of Phoenix Implementation".



Dinah Mantimane and the rest of the Phoenix team celebrate the successful entry of the first voucher into Phoenix

During this extraordinarily hectic period, USAID/Southern Africa hosted two regional Phoenix training courses; welcomed the Deputy Chief Financial Officer, David Ostermeyer, to the Mission; implemented vital information technology network enhancements; addressed serious internet bandwidth challenges; and made the MACS database ready for migration to Phoenix. This “make ready” effort was a gargantuan task that required RFMO to analyze every piece of data in a database that contained transactions dating back to the early 1990s. RFMO accomplished all this while doubling the pace on current transactions in an effort to minimize the backlog after “Go Live” Day.



Glory Masuku (USAID/Southern Africa) and Tsireletso Nare (USAID/Namibia) participate in Phoenix training

“Go Live” Day launched a new era of financial management for USAID/Southern Africa. The USAID accounts are now in a single database

that can be accessed worldwide using a common set of accounting standards. This moves us closer to an era of a consistent centralized accounting system that makes possible *decentralized* financial information that is accessible from the desk tops of decision makers anywhere in the world.



The Phoenix team and David Ostermeyer (he's the one wearing the Lesotho hat) on “Go Live” Day

The Phoenix internet platform has enhanced our ability to provide better services to our external client missions: USAID/Namibia and USAID/Zimbabwe. With MACS, RFMO staff on-site in Namibia prepared physical accounting documents and coordinated their approvals, but then had to fax them to Botswana for entry into MACS. Now Namibia-based staff will be able to enter their own transactions directly into Phoenix. Previously, decision makers in Namibia had to request financial reporting from Botswana. With Phoenix, financial reporting will be accessible and available on demand in Namibia.

What does this mean to those of us who are not in RFMO? We will all benefit from lower accounting costs and from faster, more flexible access to vital financial information.

Was Phoenix implementation hard work? Absolutely! Was this work time well spent? Definitely! USAID/Southern Africa had the opportunity to be a significant part of one of USAID's boldest administrative initiatives, while also making an investment in the future.

The Regional Environmental Advisor Corner

USAID/Madagascar and the Africa Bureau sponsored two environmental training workshops in June: one in the National Park of Ranomafana and the other in Fenerive-Est. More than ninety representatives from the government, private voluntary organizations, and non-governmental organizations participated.

The interactive workshops focused on compliance with USAID's environmental procedures (22 CFR 216 and ADS 204). They also highlighted cutting-edge environmental management issues that cross programmatic lines. This helped participants understand how to mainstream environmental considerations into USAID programs. Small group working sessions and field visits provided opportunities to share lessons learned.

Saliou Mamadou Diallo from Guinée-Ecologie, a regional African environmental organization, skillfully facilitated the workshop in French. The primary goals of Guinée-Ecologie are to facilitate information exchange, raise environmental awareness, and coordinate environmental management training and skills development programs in West Africa. His role in the Madagascar workshops was illustrative of how sub-regional African environmental institutions are developing into Centers of Excellence that can provide specialist services and intellectual leadership to improve environmental assessment and management policy and practice in Africa.



Camilien Saint-Cyr, Regional Environmental Advisor, makes his point at the environmental workshop in Madagascar

For more information about environmental training, contact [Camilien Saint-Cyr](mailto:Camilien.Saint-Cyr@usaid.gov) or visit www.encapafrika.org.

FOCUS ON:

The Value of Data

Hydrological technicians in Angola, Namibia, and Botswana monitor the flow of the Okavango River. OKACOM is responsible for the management of shared water resources within the basin. The data collected by OKACOM member states are essential for making informed decisions on sustainable development within the basin.

With USAID/Southern Africa support, the Namibian Department of Water Affairs (DWA) organized an information management course for hydrological technicians from the three riparian countries. The course was held in Windhoek in May, with field exercises conducted in Rundu.

DWA had three objectives for the course: (a) emphasize the importance of the data collected, (b) demonstrate techniques for ensuring quality control during the collection and analysis of water flow data, and (c) create an opportunity for technicians from the three countries to share experiences with collecting water resources monitoring information.

Angola, Botswana, and Namibia use different techniques for collecting river flow data. Hydrological technicians had an opportunity to discuss the differences and the needs for field training related to the different approaches. Botswana and Namibia were particularly interested in the use of digital data loggers and an Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler in Angola, which uses a sonar signal to determine river heights and flows. Angola and Namibia were impressed with the dedication of technicians from Botswana, who work in teams responsible for daily flow gauging.

Future courses will allow Angola and Botswana the opportunity to conduct training in technical areas in which they have a comparative advantage. For example, Angola will conduct training in the use of digital data loggers and

Botswana will present their approach to practical flow gauging and surveying.

The course illustrated the importance of data and what happens to the information that participants collect. As one trainee from Botswana remarked, "I now understand how the information I collect is used and I know that the data are valuable."



Information Management Course in Windhoek

For more information about Okavango River Basin activities, contact [Chris Schaan](#).

Avian Influenza

Avian Influenza is at our doorstep. How prepared are we? Recent press reports suggest that the disease has been detected in ostriches in South Africa, although the Government of South Africa has yet to determine the level of threat.



Planning and preparedness activities support a country's ability to build capacity for monitoring, detection, and responding to avian influenza in order to prevent further spread and lessen its impact on animal and human populations. USAID has sent Personal Protective

Equipment (PPE) kits to each country in Southern Africa, including non-presence countries. At left, Cecilia Khupe models protective clothing from the PPE kit.

In July and August, the Food and Agriculture Organization, with support from USAID and USDA/APHIS, will conduct two training workshops in South Africa for laboratory technicians from the region. This will prepare them to handle samples in case the deadly virus – Avian Influenza H5N1 – is detected in their countries.

For more information on Avian Influenza, contact [Cecilia Khupe](#) or visit http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/home/News/news_items/avian_influenza.html.



USAID TRADE HUB HAPPENINGS

In coordination with Africa Fast Track Trade (AFTT), the USAID Trade Hub sponsored the participation of entrepreneurs from ten Southern African countries in the **Fancy Food Show** in Chicago in May. In preparation for the show, AGOA Advisor Amanda Hilligas worked with AFTT and the National Association for the Specialty Food Trade to develop media materials to promote participating companies from Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, and Zambia. Each company was featured in an industry publication aimed at 40,000 buyers, importers, and customers in the specialty food trade. The USAID Trade Hub partnered with the Market Access, Trade and Enabling Policies Program at USAID/Zambia and the Support for Agriculturally Linked Enterprises Project at USAID/Malawi on this media campaign.



Nali Pepper Sauce at the Fancy Food Show in Chicago

Having attracted the attention of potential buyers at the Fancy Food Show, **Elephant Pepper Sauces** may soon be available in U.S. supermarkets and specialty food stores. African Spices, the Zambian company that markets the Elephant Pepper products, donates 10% of its profits on this brand to the Elephant Pepper Development Trust, a not-for-profit organization that works to mitigate conflict between humans and elephants. See the latest issue of INSAT, available on the USAID Trade Hub website at www.satradehub.org, for more information about this socially and environmentally conscious company.

The USAID Trade Hub hosted a **Regional Roundtable on the Business Environment and Competitiveness in Southern Africa** in Johannesburg in May. Nikolaus Cypionka, Task Force Director, Botswana Business and Economic Advisory Council, delivered the keynote address: *A Vision for a Dynamic and Competitive Southern Africa*. Mfundo Nkuhlu, former South African Trade Negotiator and now Managing Director at Nedbank Corporate Bank, led a breakfast discussion on the importance of multilateral and WTO trade negotiations to the region's private sector. More than fifty participants from eleven countries participated in the roundtable. Further details are available in the latest issue of INSAT, available on the USAID Trade Hub website at www.satradehub.org.

During the Regional Roundtable on the Business Environment and Competitiveness in Southern Africa, the USAID Trade Hub launched a series of five **educational films on trade-related issues**:

- The Business Environment: Toward a More Competitive Southern Africa
- Private Sector Advocacy: Speaking as One Voice for Policy Change
- Trade Preferences and AGOA: A Path to Economic Growth?
- Trade Facilitation: Creating Faster and Cheaper Access to Markets
- HIV/AIDS and Business: What the Private Sector Can Do

The films provided the backdrop to lively discussions on the business environment and competitiveness in Southern Africa. Since the launch on May 23, more than seven hundred people have seen the films in ten events in Southern Africa and internationally.

The USAID Trade Hub will be scheduling viewings of the films at workshops throughout the region. For more information about the films, or to request a viewing, contact Lisa Yarmoshuk at lyarmoshuk@satradehub.org.



Lisa Yarmoshuk conducting an interview for the film series

Immediately following the Regional Roundtable on the Business Environment and Competitiveness in Southern Africa, the USAID Trade Hub conducted an **AGOA workshop** for representatives of each of the AGOA-eligible countries in Southern Africa. The training focused on opportunities available under AGOA and sharing of information about AGOA activities taking place in each country. The workshop was facilitated by the USAID Trade Hub AGOA Advisor, Amanda Hilligas, and Phyllis Shearer-Jones, an AGOA expert based in Washington D.C.

USAID/Southern Africa sponsored nine Southern African delegates to the **Fifth Annual U.S.-Sub-Saharan African Trade and Economic Cooperation Forum** from June 6-7 at the Department of State. Separate events for the private sector and civil society took place at different venues in Washington during the same week.

The **AGOA Private Sector Forum** focused on sectors where U.S.-Africa trade can most easily and quickly be increased and sustained over the long term. Nikolaus Czipionka, Task Force Director, Botswana Business and Economic Advisory Council; Wendy-Lee de Goede, Business Development Manager at logistics giant UTI; and Hennie Fourie, CEO of the Namibian Manufacturers Association, were among the delegates sponsored by USAID/Southern Africa.



Mr. Czipionka, Ms. de Goede, and Mr. Fourie at the AGOA Forum

The fifth edition of the quarterly publication ***Inside Southern African Trade (INSAT)*** is available on the USAID Trade Hub website at www.satradehub.org. This issue explores trade facilitation in Southern Africa and features an interview with Wendy-Lee de Goede, Business Development Manager at UTI in South Africa. This publication is a “must read” for anyone interested in trade issues in Southern Africa. To subscribe, e-mail INSAT@satradehub.org.



Craig Carlson has joined the USAID Trade Hub Competitiveness Team as the **Agribusiness Advisor**. Craig is an agricultural economist and private sector development specialist with extensive experience in industry and competitiveness analysis; business strategy, planning, and implementation; and market development, primarily in the food and agriculture sector. More information about Craig and the rest of the US Trade Hub team can be found at www.satradehub.org.



HAIL AND FAREWELL

In June, USAID/Southern Africa reluctantly said farewell to **Ginger Waddell**, Project Development Officer and Acting Director of the Regional Program Planning Office (RPPO). After some well-deserved home leave, Ginger heads to USAID/Nicaragua as the Supervisory Program Officer.

Roslyn Waters-Jensen, formerly Supervisory General Development Officer in the Regional Program Implementation Office, has assumed responsibility for heading RPPO as Supervisory Program Officer.

During the second quarter, USAID/Southern Africa also lost the following Executive Office employees through a reduction in force: Gilbert Mogodu, Sylvester Dube, Lebora Ponatshego, Majaga Masalila, Mongale Kwapa, Babolai Molaodi, and Sophia Matopote.

The reduction in force was the result of the implementation of the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) program. Thankfully, this is not really “goodbye” since all of these employees are now working for the U.S. Embassy under ICASS.